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ABSTRACT

Produced by Gary High School (Texas) students, this issue presents three articles on individuals who share stories about their lives in Texas. In the first article, "Henry Earls, 100 + and Still Going Strong" (Darin Baker; Joe Ritter; Michelle Mims), Earls, a resident of Timpson (Texas), describes his work in a sawmill as a youth, his mother's cow chip tea, his life as a farmer, and his witnessing of the Ku Klux Klan in action. In the second article, "Clotille Nutt, Versatile Friend" (Teri Alexander; Stacy Templeton; Grant Stephenson), Nutt, a resident of Carthage (Texas), tells stories of her life chopping cotton and working on her farm. In the final article, "Sandra Youngblood" (Sabrina Wilkerson; Joann Jones), Youngblood, a resident of Gary (Texas), provides stories of her childhood and how it differed from current student experiences that she observes during her work in the Gary High School cafeteria. (CK)

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Winter 1988

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Henry Earls

Henry Earls is a 101 year old Timpson resident who has witnessed amazing changes during a century of living. He has observed it all with a sharp eye and a keen memory. He proved to be a good friend as he shared some of the experiences he has been through as his world changed. Alease Copelin first lead us to Mr. Earls. Then Stanley Yarbrough, our principal, urged us to visit with him. We thank them both for a chance to make a friend and a chance to share his story with you.

Henry Earls

The life I lived, really started when I began working at a sawmill, called Bobo, when I was ten years old. I worked at the sawmill for about 20 years. I worked with a steer named Sam. Sam was tied to a cart, and I drove that cart for, I guess, 3 years.

I finally got a raise from 2 bits to 4 bits (2 bits is a quarter). I made pretty good. I got a raise along with a different job, than what I had.

We worked from 12 to 12, or as long as we could see. We worked by lantern a lot because a lot of work came after dark. I would clean up those lanterns every morning and put them out for that night. Then about 6:00 I would light the lanterns for the men who had to see by them. Then the next morning I would clean them again. Then I would piddle around on something else. Just wherever they needed me like toting water to the men on the yard, or stacking lumber. They called me the waterboy. I did all of this for, oh gosh, I don't know how long. As I grew older, I did more work. They would give jobs from one thing to another. If a hand dropped out or wasn't there one day, I would fill his place for that day. I did that quite often. I was the extra boy. I did this for years and years. With the different jobs I had, the work was very light, there wasn't anything to inconvenient that I couldn't do. So I did that for a many of years off and on because they used me in so many different places. I couldn't tell what I was going to do from one day to the next. It was according to who dropped out that day. I wasn't what you called a scale worker, I wasn't a sawyer, but I dogged on the cage, over the backend.

Wherever I've been and whatever I've done, I can tell you from 101 years to another 100 years. It is still that clear to me, of how I spent my time working. Every job I had, I can still tell you what I worked as. But I neve. did get much over 50 cents a day.

My dad was a hard worker, but he was what I call a very poor money manager. He only made a $1.00 a day. We would take the money we both made to what we called a commissary. They had everything you could ask for in that store. It had everything you could wish for right there. We got our pay right there every night. You would find what you wanted, if you had the money, and if you wanted to, you could save your checks ups and the 10th of the month you could turn it in and

they would give you a little cash. But there was very few people that ever saved enough to get cash. I never did get any money. As long as I worked there, I never did get a paper to turn in when I needed a little cash. Everything was paid by a paper check. We would go to the commissary and buy the things that the family needed. I was only ten years old and still in my shirttails. There were 15 kids in the family, those that could work, would work and take what we could get, and be glad to get it.

I remember that I bought my first pair of shoes when I was making two bits a day. My mother made my skirts come down to the middle of my calf, and that's what I wore for clothes. I wasn't able to buy pants. My mother made all of our garments. I got tired of looking like a girl, so I saved up my two bits to buy me a pair of pants. I had to go around looking like a little girl, and I got tired of having to wear a shirt. So, I told my father I was going to take part of my money and save it and get me a pair of britches. Of course, they were knee pants, but I was still barefooted. All the girls were barefooted, and I was barefooted, and it looked so bad with me in my shirttails looking like a girl with no shoes. So, I saved enough of my quarters, that I bought me a pair of britches and a pair of shoes. I would give my daddy two bits one day, and the next day I would save my two bits. I got two bits every day. Every other day I saved two bits for my britches and my shoes. I got this stuff at the commissary.

One day my mother sent my sister and me to the commissary. When we came back it was dark and it had been raining. All of a sudden my sister squealed; she was up ahead of me. She was looking down and said, "Look at that! Look at that!" We could see it around our feet. It was a haint going round and round our feet. It was as white as cotton. She split to run, and when she did, I grabbed her around the coattail. The first time I missed it, but I guess I was running and got a

hold of her coattail, and we ran a half a mile, maybe a mile. From then on, we never went to the commissary at sundown again. If we didn't get what we needed in the day, we went to bed hungry. We didn't even care if we were sick.

Whenever we would get sick, we didn't know what a doctor was. So my mother would go to the cow pasture and get some cow chips and put them in a pot and boil them. We would have to drink about three or four cups of that, but it stopped the cough. If we had a fever, she would go back to the pasture and get a bunch of bitterweed and put it on a sheet and wrap us up in it. When we would go to bed, she would cover our head with it. The next morning our fever would be gone. But, Lord, that cow chip was rough. Sometimes she would make us go out and run a horse until it relieved himself. Then we would have to bring that fresh in and she would make tea. We would try not to get sick very often.

The man I worked for, his name was Billy Bobo. You can ask anyone about Bobo and they will tell, who he was, what it was, and where it is. They made a flag station or train station, but it was still called Billy Bobo's sawmill. When the railroad went through they combined the sawmill and station into one. I remember the railroad coming through Timpson. It came through as a narrow gauge. It wouldn't travel what we call the standard road. When it came through, the workers were only on one side. They moved from Shreveport to Houston.

They had woodyards every ten miles. They would carry wood from one place to another. It they ran out of wood they would stop, and folks would cut some for the railroad. That's where we got a little money, from the railroad. We would cut wood and haul it for four bits a cord. They would tally it up and pay us once a month. We kept a count of how much wood we had cut. Every man had his own woodyard, and he would put his name on the cords. If I had a cord of wood my

name would be on it, and it would be stacked in a certain spot, and yours would have your name on it and it would be stacked somewhere else. The railroad paid that way.

So many things happened. Things that I only remember parts of, but not every bit. I remember working at a light plant in Timpson. I was the foreman there. I fired the boilers for a long time. It was to generate electricity for Timpson. It used to be owned by Timpson. I also worked at the cannery. A fellow named Meadows managed it. He worked for a company out of Dallas, or the man that owned it, and I was working under Mr. Meadows.

We canned sweet potatoes, tomatoes, and then started canning peas. But the water in Timpson was too hard. You couldn't cook peas or rice. We used to try to can purple hull peas there, but you never could can peas on account of the water. I also worked at cotton gins, along with all kinds of other jobs.

When I worked back then, the labor was a lot harder, because it was all done by hand, and you couldn't really take advantage of anything. Everything you did back then was done by hand. But now its all done by machinery. They cut the labor down by using fancy machines. We would work 10 hours a day for 1.15, while working with shovels, and now you make 8 to 10 dollars and hour, sitting on machines for 8 hours. We also used hand cars a lot.

When I was younger, people were glad to see a job come up. We didn't get much for what we were doing, but we got a little, and we were happy to get the money we did. Now you walk the soles off your feet before you can find a job to make a little money.

Work has kept me going all these years. I can't just sit around all of the time. Every time

I do I get stiff and then I really can't do anything. I think it has helped me live as long as I have, it's kept me fit. Work helps everyone, it keeps their body going. My wife and the doctor are fussing at me now, because I work all of the time. They don't understand me, I work a lot but I don't over do it. I have a chair with me so I can sit down if I get tired. When it rains and I can't go outside to do anything, I'm miserable the whole time. My work is very important to me, I like to take advantage of whatever I can do. I just keep something convenient for me to sit on. My health isn't very good, so if I get tired or dizzy I don't have to go very far to sit down, and when I am rested again, I can start all over again. I have to do the work that I can because you can't hire anyone because they are to expensive. People try to take advantage of you. If you can't do something you better just leave it alone, because people know you can't do it and they will charge you an arm and a leg to do it for you. But it's good to do something, whether your able or not, because there is always something that needs to be done. I didn't get this house and land paid for by just sitting around. I worked everyday for 60 cents an hour, until it was paid for.

Our land came from my grandfather from when he was a slave. Both my grandfather and father were handed down from slavery time. My grandfather, transferred or gave himself his own name. He said there were so many Hoopers, because everything and a lot of the slaves were owned by the Hoopers. He said that he wanted to give himself a name besides Hooper, so he changed his name to Oliver Earls. He just changed his whole name. When the slaves were freed most of them stayed with their masters. When they were freed, they would build and Arbor. It would look like some kind of shelter, and if you would spend the night. Then whatever amount of land you wanted is what the government would give you. But now we

Henry Earls

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have to buy the land we want.

My land has been in the family for over 100 years. I know this because I am 101 and my grandfather inherited it. He had 150 acres and he gave some to my father, but he lost his because of bad crops. So the banks closed him out. He was a very poor manager. There were some people that got 6, 7, or even 8 hundred acres. But they got it after slavery ended.

There were 15 kids in my family. Out of 15, I'm the only one that's still living. My oldest sister died when she was 116 on her birthday. But I do have a few nieces and nephews still alive though. We have all lived to be pretty old. My daddy died when he was 90.

I married when I was 16, and now I'm living with my third wife. I outlived my first two wives. I have been married 85 years.

I have raised six girls and one boy. Three of them live in Los Angeles, California and one in Dallas. The rest of them have died, two of the girls and the one boy.

All of my wives and I have always been real happy families. We haven't really ever fought, besides a few arguments. I remember I slapped one of my wives once. I was crazy. It was after we had our first baby. You know how babies crawl and wiggle around. Well, one day it fell off the bed onto the floor and it put a little know on its head. Sarcastically, I thought that was real great. The baby was crying and I slapped my wife for letting it fall off the bed. Them the baby and her both were crying. I started crying. It sounded terrible with all three of us crying.

After I married and left home, my daddy told me to always have a nest egg to fall back on. He said to save a nickel or two to help you out in hard times, like if you didn't have a job. I did what he said, he was right, because I've got a pretty good record of it. If I would have spent everything I had made, I wouldn't have saved a little. I paid for my place sitting behind a

horse at 60 cents an hour. I would ride that horse 10 miles to a job everyday and save a little of the money.

I went to Smith Chapel Church for church and school both. When I was in school there were about ten or twelve students in the class. There was just one class, too. My class only went to the third grade, but I never did get out of the second grade. That old church has had a big influence on me in many different ways.

When my daddy was farming, he had one horse to use for his work. The horse's name was Henry. I was named after that horse.

When I was farming, I used 4 mules. They did my plowing. Well, really I used them for everything. I used them for contract jobs, for laying pipelines, and a little railroad work. I always used my mules for farming. I never have used a tractor, never learned how to drive one. I didn't have any use for one, because you could do the same job with mules, and it was a lot cheaper. What I couldn't do with mules, I used my hands. I planted everything we ate, such as tomatoes, peas, potatoes and greens of all descriptions. Just the stuff to make a good meal. I still farm a little. I work my little garden and still use my two mules.

The only thing about farming, that I don't like is, that the deer run around and eat up all of my peas that I grow. I can't hardly keep the wild animals away from my crops and chickens. I have to fix my chicken coop all of the time, because the coons have been eating my chickens.

I raised tomatoes at one time and I would take them to Timpson, to the tomato sheds. There was one shed down at the corner, right of Timpson, where we would go. Let's see, there were four sheds altogether. There was one where the old jailhouse in Timpson was. There was one right there, just when you come out of town, where the Old Santa Fe depot used to be. Plus, there was one right up there at the end of the street at a

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feed store, owned by George Raines.

The tomato sheds were just big, long buildings about 100 feet long, maybe longer. They were all full of bins. They were right beside the railroad. You just put them off in those bins, and they would load them right into the boxcars. First they were graded then they were put on a long table and girls would grade them and put them in baskets. We all grew them for different companies, but they got where they could grow them in the Valley cheaper than they could grow them here, and the Valley took over.

I really can't name all the big changes I've seen throughout my life because there have been so many. I've been through every change in this country. It's hard to really pick one major change. I guess really the wages have changed the most. Back when I was young the labor was cheap. I have worked at cotton gins for $1.00 a day, and I've worked for the railroad for $1.15 a day. So see, the wages have really changed from then to now. I've been a part of every change that has been brought up.

Transportation has changed a lot, I remember walking 5, 6, and 7 miles with a light over my head. I had to make a pine torch to see how to get to work on my little trail. I have walked many a mile by a light. I went to work at 6 o'clock, and would get off at 6 o'clock. We would have to get up at 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning to get ready. My wife would always get up with me. She would fix my lunch the night before, but got up to fix my breakfast so I could eat it. I would get my torch ready afterwards.

One of my daughters was 10 years old before she ever really knew she had a daddy, because I would get up when she was asleep and then I would get home when she was asleep. All because of the hours I had to work and the time it took me to get there.

There has been so many changes that it just don't look real, because things have changed so mush from what it used to be. Things are still changing and always will change.

I really think things even out today, because of the wages and prices, and the size of families. Back when I was young the wages were low and the prices were also low, but now wages are higher, so prices are higher also. Back then you had more children. Now you have less children, but you have all of the modern conveniences like electricity, telephone, and other so called necessities to make up for children. So things really work out evenly.

I didn't go to school past the second grade, but my children went all the way through school. They did there homework by the light from the fireplace because we didn't have any electricity.

So many things have changed it's like a total different world. We didn't have lights, television, or radios. We didn't even have caskets. When you needed one someone made it out of a pine tree.

I remember that I always was doing something after work and on my days off I would farm mostly. You could only borrow 25 dollars from the bank. I would take most of that to farm with, for food. I would pay the bank off with what I made at work. The banks are a lot different too.

I also remember putting 3 or 4 of my mules together, and doing what was called a Fresno, or moving dirt, for building roads. I helped build the road from Tenaha to Nacogdoches with mules. I also helped on the road from Timpson to Center, grading roads with the mules. But, now they do it with machines. Things are a lot different now from the way it was back then.

There really isn't that much difference in the times. We didn't make much, but things didn't cost as much. You make a whole lot more now, but you also spend a lot. The cost of living is triple of what it used to be. I remember when I

used to be able to buy overalls for 6 bits or a dollar, but now you pay 16 or 17 dollars for them. Flannel shirts were anywhere from 2 bits to 35 cents. Like I said, we didn't get paid much for what we did, but we also didn't have to pay much for what we got. You could buy a 50 pound bag of flour for $1.00, a 20 lb. bag of sugar for $1.00, 25 lbs. of rice for $1.00, and bacon was 5 cents a pound. All the meats were. You could get sardines anywhere from 3 to 5 cents a box.

I never really went hunting, except when we would get possums for meat. I've been possum hunting a many a night. My first wife and I used to go possum hunting, catch 3 or 4, and take them home to clean them up, and store them for times we needed them.

I've never really been a fisherman either. I didn't have the patience to sit there to see if they were going to bite or not. My wife will sit there for hours at a time in one spot thinking that a fish is going to bite, but I was always ready to leave. I couldn't sit in one place for a long time, I always had to be moving.

I don't remember what year it was, but I can remember when the first cars came out. Then, the steering wheel was on the right side, and there were very few cars around. Even the doctors didn't have any cars. I can remember the first car that came to Timpson, when everyone else had horses and buggies.

Every day when Lois came home, I had to take her horse down to the creek and give him a bath, every day. When she got home I had to carry that horse down to the water and clean him until you couldn't see a speck of dirt on him. If I carried that horse back with a stain on it, she would say, "Well, you didn't do a good job today." and I would have to go back the next day and do that job over. There weren't any cars, just horses and buggies. There were horses in Timpson for a long time.

The first car I ever drove was a T-model

Ford. I was just beginning to learn how to drive. There were 3 peddles on the floorboard; reverse, low, and stop. One day, I had the car in the car house. I was going to back out and I lost control of it and went through the back of the house and ripped off the top of the car. I finally stopped out in a pasture. Boy that has been a long time.

I never had a driver's license and still don't, but I do drive a little. I've only had one ticket. The police officer asked me if I had a driver's license and I said, "No sir." He said, "Well, I'm real sorry.", and he handed me a ticket

Darin Baker of Loblolly, and Henry Farls

for $25.00. I went up to the court house to pay the ticket the next day, and I told the judge that I needed to take care of a ticket. He said, "Well, what would you like to do about it?" I said, " I would like to square you up." He said, "No you can't square me up." So, I had to pay the ticket. I still drive a little but I try not to break the law. If you know you're doing wrong, you shouldn't do it. So, I don't drive unless I have to.

I do remember the moonshining in Timpson. My brother made enough moonshine to float a car from here to Nacogdoches, or further. He lived in Bobo, and he had moonshine stills set up all over those woods. I remember one time when I was always so scared to do anything until I was grown. I would go out there at night when they were making whiskey and it was sour. One day I was going to trick my brother and going to check his coils. Late that afternoon my brother, one of two, fell and sprained his ankle. So, I said, "Well, I'll go up there and check on the whiskey." So, I tried to go up there that morning, and my brother said, "No, let me go." I said, "Okay, just take off."

Well, he went on up there and the law was stashed out in the woods. My brother was down on his belly, and he had about five barrels. He got down on his stomach and then he got a drink, and said, "This is so good." Then he got on his knees and took another big sip. He was looking all around, and couldn't see anyone, but the law was standing behind a tree not far from him. Then the law said, "Have you got enough?" He jumped up and said, "NO," and took one sip, and then another. When he got through drinking my brother was so unnerved that he couldn't get up. The law reached down and picked him up and brought him to my house. The law asked, "Uncle, what are you doing letting these folks make whiskey around your house? Whatever you say better be the truth!" I started to talk and one of the men cussed at me.

The other man told him to give me a chance, but I better be telling the truth. I said, "Now, it's like this. Do you see that fence over there? Over here is mine, and the other side belongs to a white man in town. Now if they've gotten over in my field, I will move them out, but I couldn't move them off anybody else's woods." Anyway, the law took everyone that was making whiskey, or mash, off to Beaumont. It was two of my brothers, and three nephews, and that were all making that mash whiskey on the same stills. Mash is what we called it. There were five stills left sitting right there where they were found, so we had to put all that stuff up.

To make mash whiskey, we would buy a chop, and a pound of sugar, and pour it in a barrel and stir it until it mixes good. We used chops and mash. If we wanted corn whiskey, we used chops.

Chops are corn that is ground up. You put that on and leave it for seven or eight days and it looks like you have a fire under there and it boils. When it quits boiling, it is ready to make whiskey with. I was always scared to do anything that a white man was involved in. I didn't do anything that I would get in trouble for, but my brother would do anything to make a dollar. He didn't even care if he was violating the law.

I never did enjoy any of that whiskey. I didn't drink. I got drunk one time in my life, and that was the last for me. I was the worst human in the world, that one time I drank. I've drunk enough cow chip tea to float a car, I reckon. All of us together have. My mother made by the gallon. My mother would go around with a hot cup of that tea. It was hot and it had an odor. That's what we had back in those days. We were glad when those days passed.

I also remember seeing the Ku Klux Klan at work in Shelby County. I was working for a man at one time that was a member of the Ku Klan Klan. There was one white gentleman up there that was messing around with another man's wife, but I

can't recall his name. Anyway, the Ku Klux Klan got him, and he was white. I was working at what we called a Light Plant one night and was firing a boiler when they came out there and tarred the man. They stripped him butt-naked and poured warm tar all over him, then rubbed feathers all over him. After that, they turned him loose. He had feathers from his neck to his feet and looked like a frizzly chicken. He went to the doctor's office to get the doctor to get the tar off him but the doctor wouldn't do a thing for him. Then the main man, who was from Lufkin, cut him right across the stomach. The man hollered real loud. The main man said he was going to cut his guts out. Then, they proceeded to tar and feather him.

I also saw one man hung. There was a white gentleman who lived out where we called Mount Gillion. He was up there is the colored quarters and had been drinking. He was up there at a cafe. They had a fish that Saturday night, that was a rarity. This man was sitting down eating a fish sandwich, and he bought a sandwich for everybody that came in there. But a particular boy came in there and the man bought him a sandwich. He ate the sandwich and hung around outside in the dark waiting for the white man to come out. When he finally did, the boy hit him with a piece of 2 by 4 and knocked him out and robbed him. This boy left and ran off and went to Houston. Before he came back, he called another fellow here in Timpson and asked how everything was going. This colored man told him that everything was okay. He said that he would be through Timpson on that four-day train. They ran a four-day train about 5:00 in the morning going from Houston to Shreveport. He said that he would be on that train that night. So that night when he came through, that colored man had already told the law that he was coming. So the law was watching for him. When he did finally arrive, the law locked him up. So the next day because the jail was so hot from the sun, they moved him to San Augustine.

Well, he knocked a jailer in the head and got away. And so a fellow by the name of Ben Powell and few others were watching the roads everywhere for him. They caught him about two miles out of Timpson and carried him to Center and locked him up. They had a quick trial and hung him the next day. They hung him in the courtyard on the Center Square. I went and saw it. Well, the fact is, the guy was kind of in my family. But they did hang him. They had a gallow built with a trap door. I wouldn't know how they tie that knot, but they put that rope around your neck and you fall through that trap door about four feet. And when you hit the end of that rope, the knot would break your neck. That was right on the Center Square, about where the tax office is now. There is an oak tree standing in its place.

A man went to pick up his body, and they wanted to kill the man that did this. If it hadn't been for a man named Ed McElroy they would have.

Some friends of the man that the boy hit were from Center. One in particular was a well-to-do white fellow. They got the boy's body which had not been dead for more than ten minutes. They drug him and someone shot him in the leg. The man that had come to pick up the body was his uncle. That was a terrible day. Yeah, I saw that right in Center.

Because of the outfits that the Ku Klux Klan wore, you could not see anything but their faces. They wore sort of something like a jacket which covered them from their head to their feet. You couldn't see anything but their eyes. They had a big, old cap on, kind of like a woman's bonnet. But, they had a on a long gown, so you couldn't tell who they were. I saw these men three times because I worked at night. They would turn them loose on the square. There used to be a doctor here. He must have been one of the members, but I really don't know for sure. If they went to him he wouldn't get that tar off of them. He didn't

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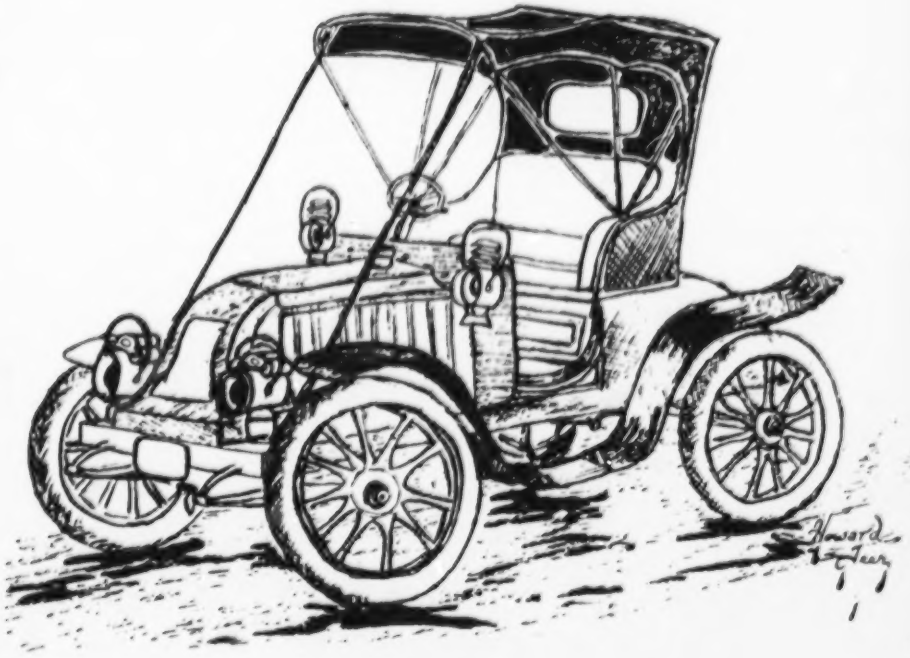
even pay them any attention. One fellow they did not tar, instead, they put sorgum syrup on him and then feathered him. He was also interfering with another man's wife.

Only one of the three people that was tarred and feathered was black. The Ku Klux Klan went after this black fellow and they could not catch him. He out ran them in a horse and buggy.

Everything has sure changed since those days.



Clotille Nutt is our friend and neighbor. She is also an amazing lady. Clotille has enending talent and energy to do many things. She is a good story teller, and shared much of her life with us.

Clotille Ross Nutt

I was born on October 23, 1910, in Panola County, Texas, five miles outside of Clayton and from where I went to school. My parents lived close to both of their parents. I went to school with my aunts and uncles for three years. My granddaddy took us to school in a surrey. The surrey had curtains on the sides and we traveled five miles to school in it. We lived by my grandparents until my daddy thought it was too much. So, he bought fifty acres of land a mile from Clayton and built a home over there. After that, we only had to walk a mile to school. After we started school we had to milk four or five cows in the morning and then walk a mile to school. We carried our lunch in a sack. We had syrup and a biscuit, ham and a biscuit, and maybe an egg and a biscuit, and that was what we had for our lunch. Sometimes my mother would make some little sugar pies. She'd roll out a piece of crust and put some sugar and butter on it and lightly bake it. That's what we had for something sweet. After I finished high school in 1929, I got married when I was 18. I wanted to start something for my husband and me. My maiden name was Clotille Ross. My daddy was Commissioner of Panola County for six or seven terms. During the eighth term he took sick. In October, he slipped down on a load of hay, hit the wagon wheel, and cracked some ribs. That winter it was very bad and my father would not go to the doctor. The cold winter caused him to get very ill and he developed cancer. The doctor said that it was the bruise that caused the cancer. He was down just about one year, and died in September of the following year. He suffered

to death. stayed at the hospital with him many times while he was on his death bed.

Well, we had to work when we got old enough to do anything. When I was about nine years old I was at just the right age. My daddy would be killing hogs he'd tell me and my sister to run and get so-and-so. He'd tell us to go get boilers and pans to put the trimmings in. My daddy raised them on skim milk and stuff out of the garden all through the summer. Then, he would plant peanuts and sweet potatoes and let the hogs root them, so they'd fatten up. Three weeks before, he would put them up in a pen and feed them corn because peanuts and sweet potatoes would make their meat flabby, and corn hardens it. They're easier to work with when you do that. We would kill our hogs and would have our meat from one year to the next, plus we had our shortening. Most all we had to buy was sugar, flour, black pepper, and stuff like that.

We chopped cotton through the summer. I have chopped cotton many-a-day for fifty cents a bale. We made our mops out of corn shucks. We would sprinkle ashes on the floor and scrub with them because they clean it just like everything else. Then we would rinse it good and you'd have the prettiest floors. Girl, listen, we made every bit of the soap and stuff we used out of the hog trimmings and cracklings that got old. We'd make crackling bread and lye soap with it and I still make lye soap. We had pretty floors because we kept them scrubbed. The old house where we lived after we moved closer to Clayton is where I'm talking about now. We worked hard, I'm telling you. The maddest I ever got at my daddy I guess was the Fourth of July and hon he had us setting out potato vines. Then, you'd go and cut your vine off your potatoes where you'd put them out and set out your vines and that's what made your baking potatoes. They would make a pretty, smooth potato. The others would be the rough ones that were for the hogs and cows. Our cows would eat a

Clotille checking cows in pasture

many sweet potatoes, but we would have to chop them up. And work, we'd pull corn, and chop and pick cotton. I'll tell you right now, my sister could beat me at picking cotton and I could beat her at chopping. That's how we worked and paid for the land and all. But anyway, we make our own mops and cedar buckets. Where we lived, we had a water shelf. This hall went through the house and on the side in the back, we had a water shelf. That's where we kept our water buckets, wash pans, and our towels hung up on a cedar board. On Saturday our job was to get brick dust and scrub the rings in the water bucket to make them look

real bri for Sunday.

With all the chores we had to do, there was no time to be mean to each other. On Saturday evenings, though, they'd let us go to the cane patch and my granddaddy would say, "Now you kids go on and help yourself." My granddaddy had some of the finest qualities. He was very conservative. We'd go get our cane and sit down and chew on it. I was the oldest on both sides, so I was pretty well rotten. Working was the only way we had of making a living. The stuff we grew was the only source of money we had. Later, we began to grow tomatoes, that was a money maker, which would give us more money. It was not many years I raised tomatoes at home.

After my husband and me raised tomatoes, we did not raise them for several years after we got married. When my family started raising tomatoes again, so did we. During the war my husband said that we had got to where we have made a complete failure of these tomatoes. Then, we bought about a hundred acres of land off the Dean Place. We did not have enough to pay it out, but we finally made enough to finish the payments. Then, we bought this other hundred acres and we had a pretty good down payment. At this time you could buy land for ten dollars an acre. We gave a thousand dollars for the first ninety-one acres of land we bought. The next hundred acres we bought cost twelve hundred dollars. And now look what land is worth.

My husband and me was in the dairy business twenty-two years. We milked cows, sold milk, and made a good living at that. We bought four hundred and seventy-seven acres in Tenaha. We couldn't find any more land around here to buy. We were in the dairy business and we were increasing in cattle all the time. So we needed more land. I was doing texture work at a house close to the land we bought and I found out that this land was for sale. I went home and told my husband about it that night. My husband said he

Clotille working in the sweet potato patch

didn't kn if we could master that or not because it was twenty seven thousand dollars. So, he went and talked to the banker. The banker told him that he would have to look at it and try see what he could do as soon as possible because we needed the land and fast. There was another guy that wanted to buy this land also, so, we had to work to get the money fast. The banker finally let us have the money. Charles, our oldest son, wanted to buy half interest in it. He had been pipe lining and had enough money to make his down payment. This helped us to get all the land. We still own this land today. My husband passed away in 1978. Before he got sick, we had a big bunch of cows and were in the Charolais business. I told him, "Daddy, let's just sell the Charolais cows because you're not able to see after and work with them." I didn't think he was ever going to turn loose and sell the cows, but he finally realized that he wasn't able to tend to them. Because of this he sold them. After they were sold, we put the money into equity. I was 62 whenever we went out of the dairy business and he said that we had just milked long enough. We would have had to build a new barn and at our age he didn't think it would be profitable, so we sold our dairy cows. We had put our money in equity, our dairy cattle, the Credit Union in Houston, and the Milk Credit Union. So, when my husband sold his Charolais cows, we withdrew the interest from our savings. His doctor bills were just outrageous. I kept him at the hospital in Carthage for four months and two days. I stayed there night and day with him and would come home in the evenings maybe around five o'clock while his sister would come sit with him. I would come home to see about the cows and things we had there. My son stopped by and saw about the oxen. My husband's doctor bill was $12,224. Before my husband passed away, we lacked $700 having the place paid off. My son withdrew his half in it because he wanted to buy the Dairy Queen and a

Clotille shaking soil from potato bunch

home in Center. I told him if he could see after the farm I could see about this here. I've lived at this house for seven years by myself and helped make the payment on that place, but we lacked thirteen thousand dollars having the farm paid out. Well, it just nearly worried him to death because he was leaving me with a big responsibility. I said, "Daddy, don't worry about it. I'm the type not to worry. I don't worry because there is always a way out if you manage things right. Don't worry about it. If I can't pay for it and the children don't want it bad enough to pay it off, then I'll sell the thing and divide the money." That kindly eased his mind. In May of '79 after he passed away we got a chance to lease it for lignite and I paid the farm off. It's all in the clear now, but I'm still working just like I did before he passed away. I'm 76 years old and I enjoy working. I stay busy and I don't get upset about things such as indebtedness because there's always a way out. My husband and I got along just fine. We had five children, three boys and two girls. We had a big family counting our sixteen grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren. I worked even with such a large family of seven. I did texture work when I didn't have anything else to help him with. I'd go to the field and work just like he did. I was with him everywhere he went. When we got out of the dairy, we had some cows at the farm and some at the place we were living in then. We'd tend to these then we'd go to the farm and tend to those. We had a little Mexican shack at the farm. We kept Mexicans in. It had a little stove, refrigerator, and other things in it. If it got cold it had heaters. We'd go down there and heat it up and fix us something to eat. We just enjoyed life. Buford wasn't but 68 when he died.

My husband bought some land in Carthage where we were going to build houses and sell them. Well, we built one and we got into it. My sister lived in Carthage and her husband was a painter.

Clotille shows off biggest potatoes

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He wouldn't show me how to do nothing and it made me mad. So, she came over one Saturday evening and said, "Clo, how are ya'll gonna fix the walls?" I said, "Paper them, I guess." We already had the sheetrock up. "Well," she said, "that takes brains as well as work." I said, "Oh my goodness! I probably can't do it." Anyway I got it taped out and floated. This was how it was supposed to be. I told my husband and he said, "Well, whatever." I said, "Daddy, we'll start in the bathroom and if we see we can't do it then we'll hire somebody to do it." Boy, I'll tell you, it was bad when we got into that. You see, he's had back problems ever since he was two years old. He had slow fever, which settled in his back, and he couldn't get around very well. We started with the ceiling in the bathroom and there were four pieces we had cut. We were going to put it up, but, honey, we never did get the first one up. I got so tickled, I couldn't help but think about what Hazel had told me. He said, "What in the world are you laughing at?" I said, "We just haven't got the brains!" He said, "Boy, I'll tell you what, I just can't turn it loose. You'll have to get someone else to paper it." Well, I took Wanda, my oldest daughter, and hon, we papered that house. She was quick and little but I'd show her how and we did it. I did not have any equipment or anything like they have to tape and float now a days. I had to use a syrup can lid. I took the lid off from the can and cut the rim off from around it. Then, I smoothed it down level and bent it half way up. And that is what I used to put up my first paper with. I had to use this type of equipment until I could afford to buy better tools to work with. I worked at hundred thousand homes doing this. Using the better tools, people would charge extreme prices to paper houses on Caledonia Lake. Even so, I enjoyed papering, painting, taping, floating, and texturing. I did a little of all kinds. I guess there is not anything that I just do not enjoy. I

really like working. Everyone says that it is work that keeps you going. After Dr. Rappaport had finished my kidney stones, he said that I could go back home and go to work. This would keep me from feeling sorry for myself and I would get better faster.

I believe that I have been blessed. I have never been really sick, but I have had six operations. I had to have some kidney stones removed. The kind of work I had been doing was over for the moment. My operations had made my arm very sore and I was unable to continue what I had been doing. I could still bake, piece quilts,

and do so little things around the house. So, when the Lord gets ready for me, I will have some quilts saved up for my children.

My sister said just the other day, "There is just two of us left." There were four in our family, three girls and one boy. My brother was just six years old when Buford and I got married. As he got older, he helped me with many things.

After Buford and I were married, we went to work for ourselves. I went to work chopping cotton on the Monday after we got married on Saturday.

Back then we would build playhouses out in the woods for entertainment. We would rake straw up and make rooms, straw beds, chairs, and other things with it. We had a lot of friends to help us.

I remember one time when I had a friend named Myrtle. She had her doll out in the woods. It was just a rag doll. Our teacher in school had assigned us to write an autobiography of our life and we didn't really know what that meant. Myrtle said, "Oh, I forget my doll and left it out in the woods. I bet the buzzards have eaten it up. Isn't that what you'd put in an autobiography?" The teacher just laughed and laughed.

A week ago yesterday I bought me four calves. I feed them on the bottle. I've also been working in my garden. I've already started planting my squash in cups and they have come up. Now I'm going to put them out in the field. I have been working since January getting all the things ready to plant in the field. My squash and tomatoes are ready to be planted now. I've got cucumber, watermelons, cantaloupes, cabbage, a little bit of everything. I planted them a little late in cups. They are not supposed to be put in the field until the frost has passed, but when it is time to plant, I will have everything ready to go. I've learned that if you're gonna sell anything you've got to have it early. We were early last year, and we sold quite a bit of stuff. I planted

everything in cups just like I did last year, but there's been a difference this year. I haven't been able to understand or figure out the weather. The humidity hasn't been like it was last year. You have to be careful about watering your vegetables while they're still in the cups. One time I got a batch of mine too wet and they were too damp to grow. I had to come back and put some more seeds in the cups. You have to watch very carefully and learn how to do this before you can be successful with it.

During the day I piece quilts and catch up with other things. I cook dinner for two men everyday and also milk my cows. I get up at five o'clock every morning and go all day long. Yesterday, I put out onions. I already had some out, but it rained so much until they drowned and the plants were killed. So, now I have to reset them, but I'm only doing a few of them.

I go all day long. When I go to bed at night, I go to sleep. You've always heard the old saying, Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise. So, that's what I do.

I have to study to learn how to grow all my vegetables. I even have books that I read to help me out. This is the kind of life I enjoy. I don't care anything about being a runabout. Just staying home and working is fine with me.

Hon, when I was at home, we farmed. That's the only way we had of making any money. I guess that's the reason I've learned to manage things like I do, because I grew up learning how to do these things. When we bought our first ninety-one acres, everybody said, "You won't pay for it". But you know, if you set your mind and heart to things, such as making ends meet, you usually succeed. My daddy was the one who educated me and my sisters. He told me, "Ya'll have done better than any of the children and prospered is what he meant".

My middle sister and her husband inherited most of their land. I don't think they bought but

Clotille checking chickens, ducks, and turkeys

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twenty acres. His people passed away and heired their land. My baby sister and her family only owned one acre of land, which was the one their house was on. My husband and I paid for quite a bit of land. We worked and milked cows to pay it off.

Here recently, I went up to a dairy farm and got three full blooded cows. Two Holstein and one full blooded Brown Swiss calf. I also bought me a white-faced calf which I'm gonna make pay for the raising of the others. I think I can do it. He's a pretty thing. He's a real good little buddy and the others are doing so good. I got them a week ago, yesterday. I think I'm going to buy me one more, and that will make me twenty-five head that I have bought and raised on the bottle. I am gonna buy one more. This man said in the last of June, July, and August are the best times to buy calves. They're cheaper then, than any other time. So, that's when I'm planning on being in the business in full swing. I'll get me several more because I have really enjoyed fooling with these calves. My son also helps me in any way possible. He comes over every day. I then fix lunch for him and the Mexican. And anything I have not done until then, he does for me. Calves aren't a real big trouble. I feed them twice a day. In the morning I try to feed them by 7:30 and again by 5:00 in the afternoon. I make up the calves milk myself. I make it the same temperature as regular cows milk. I make it up with warm water and powdered milk. I got these calves over in Keatchie when they were only three days old. Now, they are two weeks old and already on the bottle and are no trouble at all. The first week you get calves you have to feed them half the feed. Then, you begin increasing their amount until they are able to eat a full feeding. If you feed the calves a full amount of food when you first get them it will scour the calves every time because it is too rich for them. I start off

Clotille grabs chicken by legs to show how to hold

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feeding my calves half the amount and increase the amount as they grow. The cup I feed my cows in shows how much to feed the calves.

A funny thing about me is that I never tire. People say that they don't know how I go and do everything that I do. I tell them that I enjoy it very much. I have worked my flower beds out this week. I have hoed out all the weeds and reset some of my rose bushes. Right now I'm getting ready to fix a place for my Dahlias. I bought a Camellia the other day and set it out this morning. Today was a very good day to transplant and set out flowers. So, that is what I have been doing lately. In the third chapter of Ecclesiastics it says that there is a time for everything. I have this almanac at home that tells everything on planting. It tells when bearing days are, when plants won't bear anything, and when not to plant anything. It tells you mostly anything you need to know about planting. I go by it because I believe that there are smarter people that me. The book is hardly ever wrong with its predictions. These are some of the many things I enjoy doing each day to help pass the time and have something to be proud of.

Sandra Youngblood has lived in Gary since she was married. She is the mother of past and present Gary students. One daughter, Lori, was a member of the original Loblolly staff in 1973, when we got started. Sandra Youngblood now works in the school cafeteria and so we see this friend everyday.

Sandra Youngblood

I was born in a small town in west Texas near Abilene, in a little house on the Brazos River. The doctor had to walk a log to get to the house. I always thought that was funny. My favorite cousin was told the same story. She's nine months older that I am, and ended up marring my husband's youngest brother. After all these years we are still favorite cousins and sisters-in-law. Also one of her sisters married another brother. So we were all double kin. It's interesting.

I met my husband at his cousins house in Plainview. He had come in from the wheat harvest up in the Dakotas. He was 25 and I was 16. That was young but it lasted 32 years. We moved here where his people are.

I lived my younger life in a trailer and we moved three or four times a year. It's very hard on a child in school. The books are not the same from town to town. That's not fair. It should be the same book for every subject, at least in the whole state.

My father made a good living as a boiler maker in the union. We made two trips to California when I was young, but mostly moved around Texas and the west. Growing up in the '40's was a lot like now. We liked the same foods kids like now, junk food. Only we didn't have access to as much. There's so much more variety of things now.

We always celebrated every thing that came along. We had a big family and circle of friends. We loved Christmas dearly. We always hung a

stocking. We would try to go back to Abilene (home), no matter where we were. All the aunts and uncles came in to grandmothers. Everyone brought gifts and all sorts of sweets. We always had Santa on Christmas Eve, and then we'd have a big dinner on Christmas and everyone had to go home that evening.

We always had chicken dressing, turkey, cranberry sauce, cakes, pies, and candy. We still have all the traditional foods now. New Years is a good day too. We always repeat Christmas menus plus black eyed peas and salt jowl for luck.

Easter we repeated the big reunions. We were always ready for that. We'd all get together and had a big time. Most of the time it's at my home now. I have a bigger house. We have ice cream suppers, barbecues, wiener roasts, just anything to bring everyone together. We enjoy one another. We were always like that growing up. The women liked to talk, and the men watched ball games, or played dominoes or had volley ball game or touch football. Our families have gotten so big we go to the lake a lot or to a park.

The subject of clothes over the years is funny. It goes a full circle. The fashions when I was a teenager are a lot like now except for big circle skirts. We had can-can petticoats and poodles on the skirts. Shoes that tied were popular and penny loafers with socks. I refused to wear socks. I felt like you looked silly. I still don't like socks with dresses. Not many wore blue jeans or pants. I am glad we do now.

My mother must have been born before her time. She loved purple or lavender and pretty flowered materials. Not many wore those things. She wore some pretty flowered silk taffeta dresses. She liked pants, but no one wore any. They weren't too lady like. The dresses and skirts have gone from mid calf to the knees to mini, back to knee, and mid calf. Shoes float all over the style list. I love the new colors we have now in everything. We have a huge selection

of styles and colors now. We didn't always, especially if you were large.

I guess I was very fortunate. We always lived in town. We had an allowance. We went to several movies a week. We had the swimming pools, parks, and skating to go to.

Only thing aggravating I can remember is we moved two or three times a year. It was hard on school kids. The schools would not have the same books in each subject. Some times you couldn't take your subject because they didn't teach that in your school or your class.

We had a Hudson car when I was a teenager in the '50's. Most of you will say, a what? That's just like my kids do. They don't make them any more. I don't know why. It was a good car. After I got married my dad bought a new one. They were killed in it not long after that. A train hit them in Snyder, Texas. It was a very sad time in my life. I had a good husband and a beautiful baby girl and life goes on for all of us.

I probably brought the first television into this part of the country. It was Dad's. I had a living room full of people every night. I did get tired of company every night. We didn't even have running water, but we had a television. Not too many people had running water out in the country then. And they had not had electricity for too long a time. That was hard for me to believe. I've had electricity all my life.

We got a telephone shortly after we moved into our own home. I never saw a crank telephone before I came here. Two little ladies ran it and they knew everything that went on. You just had to call and ask where the fire was, who was sick, etc. One time I got tired of this gossipy old woman that stayed on the phone, so you couldn't call out. I told her so. Party lines were terrible. Anyway she turned out to be the sister's aunt, and the aunt told them I had cussed her out. And I had not. I thought about it a little bit.

One of my husband's aunt's was raised up without all this good stuff we take for granted. When her husband bought her a washer he had to run it. She was scared of it. She only used her iron on a big table instead of an ironing board. She didn't like the television either.

Young people in the '40's didn't have as many things to do or get into as they do now. Kids loved the drive-in's, cafes, and drive-in movies. They'd get a big load of kids in a car and all go to the movies. Sometimes it would be only one dollar a car load. Some kids even got in the trunk. Now you can't find a drive-in cafe or movie. I never thought movies would drop off like they have. But we didn't have television then.

We loved to double date a lot. Sometimes a group is even more fun. A lot of parents wanted their kids to double date, especially if you were a girl. Parents hated you staying out late. They didn't like dances, and parties were very strict. My country cousins went to musicals and dancing parties, and baseball games.

Most parents expected their children to get a college education or business school. My father wanted me to go to Draughns Business College at Abilene, Texas. I messed that up by getting married at 16. My father never got to go to college. He missed it. I wanted mine to go also, but I required them to graduate from high school. I have one still in high school.

Most fathers thought their sons should go to college to succeed. The girls, it wouldn't matter so much. They'd be house wives. If they went they should be teachers. They shouldn't go into things that men did.

Most schools I went to didn't have kindergarten. We always had to go 12 years. They tried changing the hours of schools or have school all year. I hope that never comes to pass. Kids need summer and so do the teachers.

I don't remember too much of my younger years. I do remember being in the second grade

and passing the kindergarten windows and seeing all the play things. I envied my brother who was in there. Then it was play more than now.

When we were in junior high and high school you always had two study halls a day. Teacher's study hall was one form of punishment. You got demerits and you didn't want them. Some gave licks for punishment. When I was younger I got my hands spanked with a ruler and had to stand outside in the hall, just because I wanted to play something better than two sticks. I was in the

third grade. Our school days started with a brisk walk across town to school. If you lived in the city limits you had to walk. I never lived where I had to ride a bus.

We seemed to always attend a large school. So you had to walk a lot between classes. I remember one Colorado Springs school that was two stories. I had a locker on one end and classes on the bottom and top, at the other end. You were not allowed to take any other book in that class, but for that class. Now that was tough. I was in the tenth grade. I never ate in a school cafeteria. We always had open campus.

It seemed like teachers were stricter in the past than they are now. We always had homework. And I mean you worked until ten o'clock on it. Different schools have different systems and the teachers have to abide. I went to six high schools in my two and a half high school years. Then I got married, came to East Texas, and I've been here ever since.

I remember three teachers most. One was a sixth grade teacher in Sweetwater. She was a history teacher and had the most beautiful handwriting. She was left handed. She was so strict, but I really learned from her. And I respected her. One teacher taught me the secret of algebra and it was a breeze for me then. And also I had one very helpful teacher in English and languages. I really feel like I have forgotten more than I have ever learned.

The teachers now have a lot more freedom in teaching and living too. They had to obey stricter rules then than now about clothes, mode of living, or company they kept. They had to be above reproach.

There used to be closer family relationships than we have now. It's odd how fast the family members are drifting apart. Each goes his own way.

A long time ago aunts, uncles, and grandmothers were living in the same house. Only

once we ha mother's brother come to live with us for a little while. I was about 12. I had one brother and two smaller sisters. We really enjoyed our Uncle Jake. He had been in the war. He had a knack for telling wonderful stories.

Many young people lived in the same town. That is, they generally met and married someone from that town or one close by. We moved around so much that would be nearly impossible. My dad rebuilt refineries. So when the job was over, we'd move on to the next job. We had short friendships. I met my husband at his cousins house. He had came off a big wheat harvest and came by to visit. He left the next day for East Texas. I knew I really liked him but I was 16 and he was 25. He didn't come back for three months. We got married not long afterwards. All our arrangements were made by Odell's friends. We married in October. We came down here in November and have been here ever since. My mother and dad were very upset, my being so young. But it lasted 30 years.

Now a days, the children don't think anything of marrying and divorcing. It's very sad to me. I have six children that I love dearly. We have had one church wedding, one in the house and one in the yard. They were all pretty and have lasted. I'm very proud of that.

I think most of the weddings before my time were church weddings but now anything goes. The girls didn't jump up and leave their husbands like they do now. You were a sorry women if you did. And it was so hard to make a living for yourself and children. Some girls married around 18 to 25. But over in the east, some people thought if you didn't marry before 17 or 18 you were an old maid.

A long time ago you had a dowery to bring with you to get married. I remember I had started a hope chest. I didn't have much in it though.

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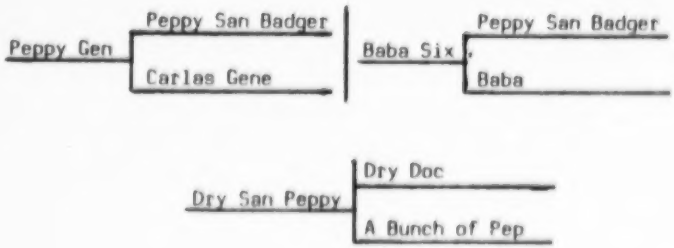

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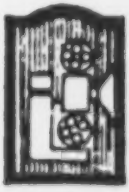

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